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Hectic Fever

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of Virginia

admitted April 13. 1819

1894

Hectic Fever

This disease is most commonly connected with Pulmonary Consumption, though other causes sometimes produce it. Whatever greatly irritates the system may excite Hectic Fever. Formerly it was believed by many and Galien was of the number and is even now maintained by some, that the Fever is occasioned by the absorption of pus: but Hunter has shown that this opinion is not valid, and many facts concur to prove that copious absorption of matter may take place without Hectic Fever, and many cases of Hectic Fever occur unattended by an absorption of pus. In the absorption of matter from bones and other abscesses in the former, we have examples which are not followed by symptoms of Hectic, and in the latter we have instances in those cases of Suppurating joints in which Hectic

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Fever precedes suppuration, an occurrence by no means uncommon.

Besides Pulmonary Consumption, Puerile Fever accompanies other diseases:

1. It is to be met with, in what are called White Swellings of the joints, and also in Gout and Rheumatism:

2. It is found in Schirrous & Erosive affections and Ulcers in every part of the body, particularly in the Glandular structure, as the Mammary, the Ovaries, Uterus, Liver &c:

3. It attends congestion & obstruction of the viscera, where there is neither abscess, nor ulceration:

4. It occurs in cases of simple irritation, as when there is a Stone in the Bladder, or gall dust, or even where inflammation has resulted from swallowing pins or needles:

5. It sometimes takes place in pregnancy, merely from the irritation to the general system, occasioned by the gravid uterus and its contents.

The first of these is the fact that the
 world is not a uniform whole, but is
 made up of many different parts, each
 with its own peculiar characteristics.
 These parts are not only different in
 size and shape, but also in the way
 they are connected to each other.
 The second fact is that the world is
 not a static entity, but is constantly
 changing. The parts of the world are
 always in motion, and the way they
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Symptoms. This disease partakes of the type and general nature of Intermittent Fever. The exacerbations occur twice in the day, the first about noon, which is inconsiderable, and soon raffles a remission; the other in the evening, which gradually increases until after midnight it would, perhaps be more correct in me to point out the different circumstances, which distinguish *Sectic* from Intermittent Fever. Than, to attempt a minute detail or enumeration of symptoms ascribed to the former disease, by the various authors who have written on it: the two cases have indeed so many points of similarity, that they may sometimes be readily confounded; and it is not ^{only} of importance to a Practitioner of Medicine, that they should be discriminated, but constantly born in mind:

1. The paroxysm of *Sectic* Fever is rarely regular for any number of days in succession; but after a short time comes on without any established order at almost every hour of the day and night.

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2. The paroxysm of Fever, is often not preceded by a chill, and frequently severe rigors are experienced without any hot or sweating stage:

3. The paroxysm of Fever is not (always) relieved by perspiration, as chills and flushes continue through the discharge by the skin may be copious:

4. The paroxysm of Fever in the hot stage is invariably attended by a circumscribed flush on the cheeks:

5. The tongue in the commencement of Fever is uniformly clean and florid, and sometimes preternaturally polished, but in Intermittents it is invariably loaded with fur at first, white, & often of a bilious hue:

6. The appetite and powers of digestion continue for the most part unimpaired in Fever, sometimes increased, & the bowels for the most part in a natural condition, but in Intermittents there are generally gastric uneasiness, loss of appetite, and not frequently constipation of the bowels:

The first of these is the fact that the
 human body is a complex system of
 organs and tissues, each of which has
 its own function to perform. The second
 is the fact that the human body is
 capable of adapting itself to its
 environment. The third is the fact
 that the human body is capable of
 learning from its experiences. The
 fourth is the fact that the human
 body is capable of feeling pain and
 pleasure. The fifth is the fact that
 the human body is capable of
 thinking and reasoning. The sixth
 is the fact that the human body
 is capable of feeling love and
 hate. The seventh is the fact that
 the human body is capable of
 feeling fear and courage. The eighth
 is the fact that the human body
 is capable of feeling hope and despair.
 The ninth is the fact that the human
 body is capable of feeling joy and
 sorrow. The tenth is the fact that
 the human body is capable of feeling
 peace and war. The eleventh is the
 fact that the human body is capable
 of feeling life and death. The
 twelfth is the fact that the human
 body is capable of feeling the
 presence of God.

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7. The Urine in Hætic Fever is turbid during the paroxysm, and pellucid as water in the interval, whereas usually the reverse happens in Intermittent.

8. The mood of the patient in Hætic Fever is, however, usually cheerful; while in Intermittent, it is the reverse.

It would be easy to point out other circumstances in which the two diseases differ; but those I have mentioned are the most prominent and sufficient to form an accurate diagnosis.

Treatment. As regards the management Hætic Fever does not so resemble Intermittent, both in the general principles and in particular remedies.

The treatment naturally divides itself into two parts; that which is calculated to shorten or remove the paroxysm; and that which is suited to the intermission, or dyscrasia.

As the means of prevention Opium is considered the most efficacious: the concurrent testimony of a large number of practitioners is in its favor, but on account of the great and increasing debility in Hætic

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Thus we do not put it up with warm coverings and
the means adapted to produce inspiration. On the
same account we should withhold those means in the
subsequent part of the febrile system, & should permit the
hot & stercoratory stages to pass off with little active treat-
ment. — But in the absence of the febrile system
we pursue a different course. We use emphyse-
ma remedies which no remedy is in substitution
at among these there is a chain and I shall mention
such as succeed most strongly in the case. Hysteria
is either unfebrile or febrile: when
there is too much action as is apt to be the case, in
the early stage, the system should always be reduced
before topics are exhibited. Most generally leeches
are indicated, and the blood often drawn in such
circumstances always presents the appearance of
hyperaemia. Not with a single bleeding answers, or
the contrary, in such instances, the phlebotomy should
be frequently repeated, though moderate quantities
of blood should always be drawn off at a time.



The elementary canal not being oppressed with accumulations of food nor in any respect compressed in itself. Fever, convulsions from it are not particularly demanded. Yet I cannot but add, & so far as my slender observation can influence me, that in some cases Emetics may be given with ability; they do not act as evacuants, but by making a new salutary impulsion on the system generally through the medium of the stomach. It may be advanced as a rule, to which there is probably not a single exception, that all diseases of a ferocious nature, in which observe the paroxysmal type are essentially benefitted by this class of medicines - or in other words by active vomiting.

The system of the patient being now reduced by Antiphlogistic measures we may safely resort to Tonics: of these not the least esteemed is the Peruvian Bark; it was the favorite remedy of Cullen who spoke of its efficacy without reservations. But though supported by his high authority and that

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of many other respectable practitioners yet, from the
celebrity of them opposed to the Peruvian bark, I am
anxious to confess that - my confidence in it is not
very high: it will prove offensive to the stomach
run off by the bowels & will scarcely ever surpass the
peruvianum. Still, when we recollect, how scabious
Gallen was in the virtues of medicines, and how sparing
in his praise of them, I would not wish that
the ^{same} ~~same~~ should fall entirely into discredit.
Some have found it beneficial to combine bark
with Myrrh: but correct experience has taught
that Myrrh will answer better when exhibited
alone, or differently combined. A celebrated hospi-
tal (called Goffaldi's was here, from a practitioner of
England) employed much in Acute Fever and especially
when it accompanies Pulmonary Consumption is
the following R^y Take of Myrrh 3ij

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Carbonat of Potash ʒj

Loaf Sugar - ʒij & Water ʒvj. Mix close

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is taken up with every 4, 7 or 8 hours, as such medicines
are generally given. Many of the vegetable Litters as
Rhamnus, Senna, Gentian, Coliculus are better suited
to this disease than the Purgative Lark. Castor Oil
and Cold Cham. Tree Bark, however, is more given than
any others of this class: the latter being the most
Dr. Chapman speaks very highly in its favor, observing
that because it acts gently, it produces an answer-
ingly which is of great benefit: very many Medical
Gentlemen concur with the Doctor in the opinion
which he has advanced of the value of this medicine.
Within the last four or five years the *Uva Ursi*
has been employed, in this case it was originally intro-
duced by Dr. Bourne a Professor in the University of
Oxford in England. It has been tried in this City
and not without some utility.

I may be supposed that Rosemary which is so com-
monly used in Intermittent Fevers has not been
neglected in the disease which occupies my attention.
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attestations of respectable Physicians, with considerable advantages. In the few cases in which I have known Arnica used I was disappointed in its effects, and am therefore not disposed to speak in high terms of it.

Of late the Saccharum Lulurni has not been a little commended in Kettle River: it is spoken of by Dr. Boone of Charleston, as being a very valuable remedy; in the cases in which it has been used in this city, it has proved successful, but perhaps it should not be abandoned without further and more numerous experiments.

In Kettle River there have been very many cases of this disease. There can be no doubt; the White Pine is undoubtedly the most useful. Combined with the liberal use of Opium it constitutes the most efficacious remedy which can be administered in Kettle River. The proper method of administration is to give as much White Pine as can be conveniently taken during the day and every

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ought at best barely to prescribe a dose of *Gluten* & another
just suitable to the *hæmorrhoids*. is better. For as
disease, purely of circulation, it must be evident
that *Opium* cannot be recommended, and if we
are truly wiser, we oppose it.

but, though the one thus mentioned above is
perhaps the best, yet there are a few remarks
concerning of its great importance to be overlooked
among the *Indians*, who are drinking the same
quantity as we are very generally acknowledged.

It is the opinion more particularly of *D. Physick*, that
it affords perhaps the best means of relieving the
in *Indians*. Notwithstanding *Dr. Parrish* has not seemed
to be so much given to highly, did he ever be known
to pronounce in favour of it: it must be ever
in doses too small to be any.

In the course of the last winter *Dr. Parrish*
and *Dr. Physick* of *London* the *Peders* was in a number
of cases in his practice, as well as a consultation
with *Dr. Physick*, with manifest advantage, he says,

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that it possesses a narcotic property, and where I have
does not agree from idiosyncrasy &c. he feels persuaded
it will be found a very useful remedy.

The last remedy I shall mention is Charcoal. From
the great efficacy of this article in Intermittents,
it was supposed that it would be useful in Hætic,
and accordingly it has been tried, and the success
was such as to induce me, to place considerable con-
fidence in the remedy.

Little however will all these medicines accomplish
unless the patient is placed in a large or freely ven-
tilated apartment. It is not easy to conceive by
those who have not experienced the effect of free
ventilation, how important it is to attend to this
circumstance. A Hætic has been gradually removed
^{by placing} the patient in a room where the air circulated
freely, when remedies had been employed in vain.
Exercise is very important, and riding on horseback,
when practicable, should be preferred.

As stated such is the management of Hætic Fever.

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excited by causes which the Surgeon cannot remove.
But when the source of irritation may be entirely
by done away by an operation, or partially re-
moved by those local applications, which have a
tendency to calm it, these should be resorted to;
but to pursue the subject further would require a more
lengthy disquisition, than I am prepared to enter into
and would appear entirely irrelevant to my pre-
sent purpose. I am.